

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, and 23-41 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-10 remain withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 11-22 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 12-15 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, as well as indicated that claim 22 was allowed as is. Accordingly, to expedite prosecution of this application, Applicants have set forth some of the subject matter from claim 12 in independent claims 23 and 33.

Claim 23 includes all of the elements indicated by the Examiner as making claim 12 allowable, except for a press unit with upper and lower presses, which are set forth in claim 24. It is not believed that the press unit having upper and lower presses is necessary for patentability and, therefore, it has been taken out of independent claim 23, which instead includes the elements a "powder filling mechanism including a support plate having a top surface and a hole sized to receive the upper end of said mold" and "said upper end of said mold may be fitted in said hole without any substantial clearance therebetween and with said top surface of said support plate and a top surface of said mold being substantially flush with each other, as set forth in original claim 20.

Claim 33 sets forth some of the elements of claim 12, and also includes a "powder filling mechanism including a support plate having a top surface and a hole sized to receive said upper end of said mold" and "said upper end of said mold may be fitted in said hole without any substantial clearance therebetween and with said top surface of said support plate and a top surface of said mold being substantially flush with each other" as recited in original claim 20.

To the extent the Examiner now attempts to reject claim 33 under the same grounds as previously applied to claim 20, Applicant submits the following comments.

In contrast to that set forth in claim 33, Kato '836 discloses a table 3 with mold cavities 7 formed therein as part of the table 3. That is, Kato '836 does not disclose a support plate having

a hole, and a separate mold which fits within that hole. Therefore, Kato '836 fails to disclose a support plate and mold as set forth and arranged in claim 33.

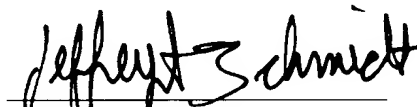
Claim 39 corresponds to original claim 20, whereas new claim 41 corresponds to original claim 22. Accordingly, claims 39 and 41 should be allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 33 and original claim 22 (which was indicated as being allowable by the Examiner), respectively.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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